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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: POLITICAL AND ELECTORAL ROUNDUP

1. STATUS OF LEGALIZATION OF PARTIES:

TWO MORE POLITICAL PARTIES APPLIED FEB. 27 TO PARTICIPATE IN APRIL 12 ELECTIONS, BRINGING TO FOURTEEN THE NUMBER OF LEGALLY INCORPORATED PARTIES. MARCH 3 IS LAST DATE FOR PARTIES WISHING TO COMPETE IN ELECTIONS TO PRESENT THEIR 5,000 SIGNATURES TO THE SUPREME COURT. POPULAR UNITY PARTY (PARTIDO DA UNIDADE POPULAR-PUP), A COALITION OF MARXIST-LENINIST GROUPS, SUBMITTED 5,700 SIGNATURES IN ITS BID FOR LEGALIZATION. AT SAME TIME IT ANNOUNCED IT WOULD RUN CANDIDATES IN AT LEAST SEVEN OF NATION'S 22 DISTRICTS. MANUEL SERRA'S POPULAR

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SOCIALIST FRONT (FRENTE SOCIALISTA POPULAR-FSP) ALSO REQUESTED LEGALIZATION FEB. 27. IN PRESENTING DOCUMENTATION

TO SUPREME COURT, FSP MILITANTS THANKED PCP AND DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (MDP/CDE) FOR (UNSPECIFIED) ASSISTANCE IN HELPING THEM INCORPORATE.

2. NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION:

PRIME MINISTER GONCALVES WAS PRESENT AT BRIEF SWEARING IN CEREMONY FEB. 27 FOR THE 25-MAN NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION (NEC) HEADED BY SUPREME COURT JUDGE ADRIANO VERA JARDIM. PM MADE A SHORT EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEECH STRESSING OPPORTUNITIES PARTIES HAVE DURING CAMPAIGN TO EDUCATE POPULATION. HE APPEALED TO PARTIES TO CONDUCT CAMPAIGN MATURELY, TO AVOID PERSONAL ATTACKS, AND INSTEAD TO STRESS FACTORS WHICH UNITE RATHER THAN DIVIDE THEM. HE ALSO OFFERED NEC ASSISTANCE OF AFM CULTURAL DYNAMIZATION TEAMS DURING CAMPAIGN.

3. PRESS AND THE ELECTIONS:

PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES SIGNED INTO LAW FEB. 27 A BILL REGULATING THE PRESS DURING THE MARCH 20-APRIL 10 ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN. THE LAW COVERS ALL DAILY NEWSPAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS ISSUED MORE FREQUENTLY THAN EVERY 15 DAYS. LAW IS DESIGNED TO ENSURE NON-DISCRIMINATORY AND EQUAL ELECTORAL COVERAGE OF PARTIES AND CANDIDATES. LAW HAS SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS REGARDING TREATMENT OF VARIOUS TYPES OF PARTISAN POLITICAL ACTS (RALLIES, PRESS CONFERENCE, ETC.) LAW REQUIRES WRITTEN MEDIA TO REMAIN AS NON-PARTISAN AS POSSIBLE IN ITS HANDLING OF THE NEWS, BUT DOES ALLOW FOR EDITORIAL OPINION DURING THE CAMPAIGN. PARTIES HAVE RECOURSE TO THE NEC, WHICH MAY LEVY FINES AND JAIL SENTENCE, IF THEY FEEL THAT THE PRESS IS MALIGNING THEM OR CONTRAVENING PARTS OF THE PRESENT LAW.

5. COMMENT: FEELING AMONG POLITICIANS WITH WHOM EMBOFFS HAVE TALKED IS THAT LAW REQUIRING PARTIES TO PRESENT 5,000 SIGNATURES TO LEGALLY INCORPORATE, AND THEREBY PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTIONS, HAS FAILED TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVES. MAIN PURPOSE FOR LAW WAS TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF PARTIES COMPETING IN THE ELECTIONS TO A SMALL NUMBER, EACH REPRESENTING A DEFINABLE PORTION OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM. EXCEPT FOR A FEW MINUTE PARTIES, LAW HAS NOT PREVENTED A PLETHORA OF PARTIES FROM INCORPORATING THEMSELVES. THEY PUBLIC WILL PROBABLY BE CONFUSED
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WHEN FACED WITH A BALLOT CONTAINING AT LEAST 14 PARTIES. OPINION POLLS SHOW THAT EVEN THE MAJOR PARTIES ARE UNKNOWN TO MANY VOTERS, NOT TO MENTION THE MINOR ONES. OUR CONTACTS FEAR THAT THE POPULACE WILL BE CONFUSED ON ELECTION DAY BY THE ELECTORAL SMORGASBORD, AND HOPE THEY WILL NOT OVERLOOK THE "MAIN DISHES." ELECTORAL COALITIONS WOULD HELP SOLVE THE PROBLEM, BUT MOST MAJOR PARTIES HAVE SAID THEY WILL RUN ALONE (EXCEPT FOR THE CDS/PDC ALLIANCE RECENTLY ANNOUNCED.) THE MARCH 3 DEADLINE FOR FORMATION OF COALITIONS STILL STANDS.
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